

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks, wherein Claim 16 has amended. Currently, Claims 3-11 and 13-17 are pending in the application.

Paragraph 1 of the Official Action indicates that Claim 16 stands objected to for containing informalities. As a result, Claim 16 has been amended to remove the noted informalities. Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim objections is respectfully requested.

Applicants express gratitude for the indication of allowed Claims 3-6 and 13-17. However, the Examiner rejects Claims 7-11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,968,068 to *Larsson*.

Larsson discloses a thread coupling for drill string members including at least one male thread and at least one female thread. The Examiner concedes that the feature of the quotient of L' divided by the diameter D_i of the imaginary cylinder is within the range of 1-2, by stating "[t]he examiner recognizes that *Larsson* neither specifically teaches or show this features but notes that a measurement of Figure 1 shows that L' can be taken to be approximately 3.5 mm." However, the Federal Circuit has made it clear that "patent drawings do not define the precise proportions of the elements and may not be relied on to show particular sizes if the specification is completely silent on this issue." *Hockerson-Halberstadt, Inc. v. Avia Group Int'l, Ltd.*, 222 F.3d 951, 55 U.S.P.Q.2d 1487 (Fed. Cir. 2000). As such, the examiner may not rely upon the particular measurements, even to determine relative proportions. Furthermore, the end of the thread is not shown in *Larsson* and thus, it is not possible to make such a measurement regarding the length L' . Accordingly, Applicants submit that *Larsson* fails to disclose the patentable features of independent Claim 7.

With regard to the rejection of dependent Claim 9, which recites a diameter D_i less than 36 mm, Applicants likewise respectfully submit that this feature is not disclosed in the document to *Larsson*. In particular, *Larsson* makes no mention of any particular measurement, and the Examiner may not use the drawings to artificially define such measurements. As such, it is submitted that dependent Claim 9 is also allowable over the art of record.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the drill bit of independent Claim 7, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinguishable over the applied document. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of record and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited.


Should any questions arise in connection with this application, or should the Examiner believe a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that she should be contacted at the number indicated below.

It is believed that no fees are due with this submission. However, should this be incorrect, please charge Deposit Account No. 50-0573.

Respectfully Submitted,

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